

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The claims are 1-6 and 8-20. Claim 1 has been amended to improve its form and to incorporate the subject matter of claim 7. Accordingly, claim 7 has been canceled and claim 8, which previously depended on claim 7, has been amended to depend on claim 1 as amended. Claims 2, 4, 5, 9, 10, 12 and 16 have been amended to improve their form or in view of the amendment to claim 1. The Abstract of the Disclosure has also been amended. Reconsideration is expressly requested.

The Abstract of the Disclosure was objected to as failing to conform with U.S. practice. In response, Applicants have amended the Abstract to correct this informality which it is respectfully submitted overcomes the Examiner's objection to the Abstract of the Disclosure.

Claims 1 and 9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for the reasons set forth on pages 2-3 of the Office Action. In response, Applicants have, inter

alia, amended claims 1 and 9 to improve their form, which it is respectfully submitted overcomes the Examiner's rejection under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph.

Claims 1-9, 14, 16, and 18-20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over *Kilabarda et al.* U.S. Patent No. 6,911,616 in view of *Nishimura JP Patent No. 05-192774*. The remaining claims were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over *Kilabarda et al.* in view of *Nishimura* and further in view of *Humblot U.S. Patent No. 4,481,401* (claims 10-13), or *Eckler et al. U.S. Patent No. 3,015,713* (claims 15 and 17). Essentially the Examiner's position was that *Kilabara et al.* shows the spot welding gun set forth in the claims, except for features which were said to be within the skill of the art or shown in the secondary references to *Nishimura*, *Humblot*, or *Eckler et al.*

In response, Applicants have amended claim 1 to better define the invention and respectfully traverse the Examiner's rejection for the following reasons.

As set forth in claim 1 as amended, Applicants' invention provides a spot welding gun, in particular, a so-called "C-gun," for robotic applications for the resistance welding of workpieces with which the accessibility is not substantially impaired and a very simple and compact structure including an electrode protection strip is feasible. As recited in claim 1 as amended, an electrode protection strip is specially guided from the winding device axially along the electrode holder to the electrode and back again to the winding device. This special arrangement and guidance of the strip provides for a compact structure of the spot welding gun without limiting the accessibility to the spot welding gun relative to commercially available spot welding guns having no strips.

None of the cited references discloses or suggests a spot welding gun having the structure set forth in claim 1 as amended or the benefits that are achieved by that structure. The primary reference to *Kilabarda et al.* simply describes a welding gun for the resistance welding of workpieces in which no strip for the protection of the electrodes is present.

The defects and deficiencies of the primary reference to Kilabarda et al. are nowhere remedied by the secondary reference to Nishimura. Nishimura discloses a spot welding gun for resistance welding of workpieces using a strip for the protection of the electrodes which strip is guided axially along the electrodes from and to the respective winding device. The winding devices are arranged on the electrode holder relatively close to the electrode and, therefore, to the workpiece to be welded. There is no disclosure or suggestion of a winding device for one electrode arranged on a bracket mounted on a base body and another winding device for the other electrode arranged on an actuating means as recited in Applicants' claim 1 as amended.

With Applicants' spot welding gun as recited in claim 1 as amended, the winding device assigned to the moveable electrode of the welding gun is caused to follow a longitudinal movement or longitudinal displacement of the electrode relative to the workpieces or sheet metals as can be seen from Applicants' FIG. 1. In contrast, the winding devices of Nishimura are connected with the electrode holder relatively close to the electrode cap

and, therefore, negatively affect the accessibility of the spot welding gun.

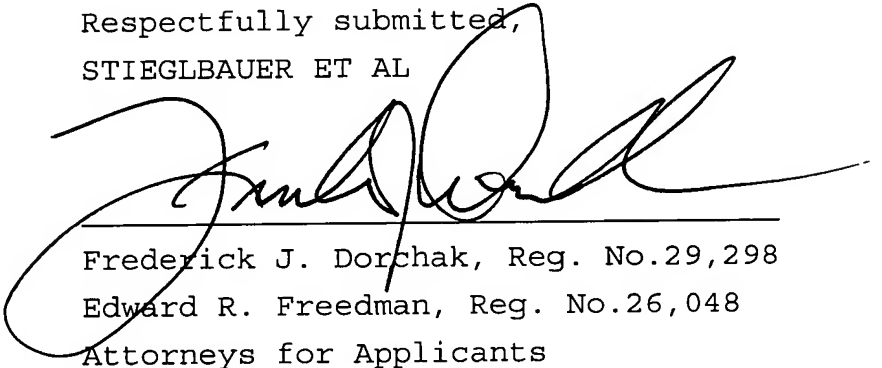
The remaining references to *Humblot* and *Eckler et al.*, cited with respect to certain dependent claims, have been considered but are believed to be no more relevant. None of these references discloses or suggests a spot welding gun wherein a winding device including an associated strip is each provided for the protection of an associated electrode of the electrodes, with one winding device being arranged on a bracket mounted on the base body and another winding device being arranged on an actuating means, so that the welding device assigned to the moveable electrode of the welding gun is thereby caused to follow a longitudinal movement or longitudinal displacement of the electrode relative to the workpieces or sheet metals.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that claim 1 as amended, together with claims 2-6 and 8-20 which depend directly or indirectly thereon, are patentable over the cited references.

In summary, claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 8-10, 12 and 16 have been amended and claim 7 has been canceled. The Abstract of the Disclosure has also been amended. In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully requested that the claims be allowed and that this application be passed to issue.

Respectfully submitted,
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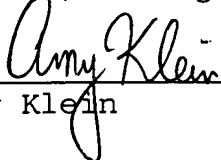


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Enclosure: Abstract of the Disclosure

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Amy Klein

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